

William D. Rodgers Letter

Tullahoma Tenn. April 17th 1863

Dear Papa and Mother

It is with great that I take my knapsack on my knee my pen in hand to write you a few lines informing you that I am very well at present and hope they may find you all enjoying the same. I have no news at all to write everything is exactly the same as when I wrote last the only thing that has transpired since then that is worth relating is a review we had the other day. A general review of Breckenridges [sic] Div. Genl. Hardee, and Polk were both present and after we had passed round in review, they called on Genl. Breckenridge for three of the best Regiments he had they wanted to see them drill and decide which was the best. Genl. B. selected our Regt. the 18th Tenn. and the 20th Lou. as the best he had and we at once commenced our Regt drilled first Lieut [sic] Col. Mashbourne of the 3d Fla drilled us we all did our best as we wanted to get the praise. but 18th Tenn. beat us and got the praise f- [sic] being the best and our Regt 3d best just before our Regt. quit the Col got us in line of Battle across the old field and told us he wanted us to make a charge just like we did when we charged the Yanks. we started in common time but didnt [sic] get far before he gave us the command charge Baynonets [sic] Double quick march when the front rank come to a charge and the rear rank to right shoulder shift arms, we make the charge and yelled with as much spirit as if the Yanks had been there sure enough. the Genls [sic] waved their hats to us and said was very well done but the 18th Tenn. beat us. they went through the same that we did and when they made the charge they got about half way across the field yelling as loud as they could. when all at once the Drum tapped and they all dropped like they were dead even the Col and his horse both come down the horse lay as close the ground as he could get and the Col right behind him. They all lay for several minutes before they got up. it beat anything I ever saw in my life and I never did hear such cheering in my life as was done when they dropped. they got the praise and well do they deserve it for they beat anything drilling that ever I saw. the Col has his horse trained to lay down when the men do.

I received a letter from Jenny and Lester the other day and also one from Johny. I have written to Jenny and Johny both today.

Well Papa and Mother, Goodbye for this time Kiss all the children for me and write soon to your affectionate Son

Wm D. Rogers

1st Florida Infantry